

CLAIMS

1. A frameless food blancher comprising, a steel tank of generally U-shaped, transverse cross sectional shape and having an open top with opposite sides, said opposite sides each having an upper edge bent inwardly to support and welded to a water trough extending inwardly therealong and thereby rigidifying said sides.
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2. The blancher described in claim 1 further characterized by having opposite ends, an end plate fabricated from sheet steel and having a main portion welded to each of said opposite ends of said tank, said plates also each having a leg portion formed integrally with said main portion for supporting said blancher.
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3. The blancher set forth in claim 2 wherein said end plate has a series of precisely located holes extending therethrough, which holes are located and cut precisely by a CNC laser cutting operation.
- 15 4. The blancher of claim 3 including a flange formed by bending along each of said main portions and their respective leg portion extending therefrom, said flange being bent at a substantial right angle to said main portion and said leg portion to rigidify said end plate.

5. The blancher set forth in claim 2 including a pair of tubes welded to and extending between said opposite end plates to rigidify said blancher.
6. A frameless food blancher comprising, a steel tank of generally U-shaped,
5 transverse cross-sectional shape and having an open top with opposite sides, said opposite tank sides each having an upper portion bent inwardly and upwardly and terminating in an edge, and a rigidifying steel member co-extensive in length with said tank and having a lower edge welded to the outside of said tank, said steel member extending inwardly and forming an upwardly facing water trough
10 therealong, said steel member welded to said edge of said upper portion of said tank side thereby forming a generally triangular in-cross-section box for rigidifying said sides.
7. The blancher described in claim 6 further characterized by having opposite ends,
15 an end plate fabricated from sheet steel and having a main portion welded to each of said opposite ends of said tank, said plates also each having a leg portion formed integrally with said main portion for supporting said blancher, said end plates formed by being cut by a CNC laser machine which simultaneously forms a series of holes extending therethrough.
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8. The blancher of claim 7 wherein said end plates have opposite vertical edges, including a flange formed by bending along each of said opposite vertical edges

of said end plate main portions and their respective leg portion extending therefrom, said flange being bent at a substantial right angle to said main portion and said leg portions to rigidify said end plate.

- 5 9. The blancher set forth in claim 8 including a pair of tubes welded to and extending between said opposite end plates to rigidify said blancher.
- 10 10. A frameless food blancher comprising, a steel tank of generally U-shaped, transverse cross sectional shape and having an open top with opposite sides, said opposite sides each having an upper edge bent inwardly to partially form a water trough therealong and thereby rigidifying said sides, said blancher having opposite ends, two end plates fabricated from sheet steel and each having a main portion, one end plate welded to each of said opposite ends of said tank, said plates also each having a leg portion integrally formed with said main portion for supporting said blancher, and a flange formed by bending along each of said end plate main portions and their respective leg portion extending therefrom, said flanges being bent at a substantial right angle to said main portion and said leg portion to rigidify said end plates.
- 15 11. The blancher as described in claim 10 including a pair of rigid tubes welded to and extending between said opposite ends plates to rigidify said blancher.
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12. As an article of manufacture, an end plate fabricated from sheet steel and for a frameless food blancher, said end plate having a main portion for being welded to a tank of said blancher, said plate also having leg portions integrally formed with said main portion and extending downwardly therefrom for supporting said blancher.
13. The article set forth in claim 12 wherein said end plate has a series of holes extending therethrough, which holes are located and cut precisely by a robotic laser machine.
14. The article of claim 13 including a flange formed by bending along each of said main portions their respective legs extending therefrom, said flange being bent at a substantial right angle to said main portion and said legs to rigidify said end plate.
15. A method of manufacturing a steel end plate for a food blancher, said end plate having a main portion for being welded to a tank end and an integral leg portion with a lower edge and extending from said main portion, said method comprising providing a steel sheet and automatically cutting out from said steel sheet, said main portion and said integral leg portion to form said end plate having opposite side edges and also substantially simultaneously locating and cutting holes in said end portion, all said cutting being done automatically by a CNC laser machine.

16. The method as claimed in claim 15 including bending outwardly turned flanges along said sides of said end plate, and bending outwardly turned flanges along said lower edge of said integral leg portion.